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Flight Test Section
Hunter Field, Ga.



Air Mail

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Hello, Folks,

Back home at last! - Landed here yesterday about 1:30 in the afternoon. He took off from Mitchell Field at 9:30 and passed over Washington around ten minutes to eleven. - He had pretty much of a head wind, so it cut down our ~~flyer~~ ground speed a little!

I wanted awfully much to fly over the house - circle a few times and ~~change~~ my prop pitch - making the engines "roar" - but decided against it. First off. - the radius of turn of a B-17 would have put me over the restricted part of town, and secondly, - you wouldn't have known it was me - tho you might have had a good idea. There are times when I wish you lived in a country town - so I could leave no doubt as to when I go "over"! -

We went up to Providence, R.I. on Wednesday night. - Hall broke as we were going "home" for the day.

Because of the situation, the test pilots were the only ones available - so by ten that night we were off the ground and on our way. - (I went as co-pilot, for I haven't had enough official time in a B-17 to check out) It was the first night flying I had done in a long time - and very interesting. - He climbed straight to 7000 ft - and then put the ship on "automatic pilot" - (What a deal!) So then - my chief duties were that of navigator until we got ready to land. He passed over D.C. about a quarter to one and if we hadn't been so high, - I just know that if I wouldn't have taken Fred's roof off - some of his neighbors would have been missing theirs!

It was also my first night view of Washington! Very pretty - but the immensity of New York at night far outshadows it. - Honestly - I've never seen anything like it!

We got to Providence about 2:45 A.M. - so it was pretty late by the time we got to bed. - Went into town ~~the~~ after getting up - just looking things over. About 5 we took off for Mitchell, on Long Island, - to get gas and come on back here. - But upon arriving - the weather in Savannah was too bad, so we had to spend the night in New York! - (about an hour's trip from the airport). The next day (Friday) we waited at the airport for New York's weather to break - but whenever the field would open even enough to allow instrument take off - (one mile visibility and 500' to the clouds) - it would close (get worse) before we could

start our engines and take off - About that night - we decided - "what the heck - tomorrow is another day" - so we went and got us a room in the B.O.Q at Mitchell!

I had an awful cold when we left here that night and so by the time we got a hotel room in New York - the bed was the only thing I wanted. - However, we did walk a few blocks and see Times square before going to bed. - I called & talked to both Mr. Clarence, and Paul Hughes' mother. I was sorry not to get to see them, - but my cold had just knocked too much out of me. - The second night - I could have gone, but the 3 ships' crews who were there, the officers - all wanted to "do something" and I couldn't very well leave them. - The "do something" consisted of going to see the play, "Life with Father". - All of us were practically broke, leaving here so fast - and tho we had personal checks along - no one knew us - so naturally no one would cash them. - See. - I had a swell chance in N.Y. to get me some shoes, before we went out to the field - but no money! The last night there - we split up all the money so each fellow had five dollars - and started from there. - First came trainfare to & from N.Y. - \$1.00 round trip. - Then a ticket to the show for \$1.80 a piece. - Fifty cents for our quarters and two meals just about finished it off! - Was fun tho, to worry and figure how to get the best time, and really do something we wanted to, and yet - keep within our total principal! He really wanted to see "Oklahoma"

but when we finally got a place where we could get a ticket - they wanted around \$6 for each! - He enjoyed the show we did see. - It was different seeing a stage show, and to see a good one just topped things off.

Mrs. La Ciel (Paul's Mother) was very nice to talk to, and really seemed anxious to have me. - I was awfully sorry I couldn't at least run in and meet her. - Maybe next time I will have a better opportunity - and the time I do have I won't be bothered with a cold.

Mr. Clarence was all talk about his visit with you folks - and wanted me to at least stop by his place of business the next morning. - The next morning after I found we would have to return to field - I called him at Forsberg's - and tried to get him to meet me at Penn Station - as we could both be on our way then at one and the same time. - But he was all by himself and couldn't leave the business.

Anyway - the trip was an unlooked for, pleasant diversion - and maybe next time there might be some way to stop at Washington. You see, - they keep up with us at all times by radio & teletype reports - so unless we have a legitimate reason, we can't go landing at just any place we get the notion! - I had my eye on Bolling tho, - rest assured!

My cold is somewhat better now. - What made it so hard on me was that all my chest + stomach muscles were sore to start with - and besides in my head - the cold settled in those muscles, too! Honestly - after sitting in the cockpit for a long stretch, it would take me 5 minutes to get all the muscles sorted out and appraised, so I could stand up-right! You see, just the day before, we had had a physical aptitude test which made us all sore. - Had to do chin + mus - and hardest was "sit ups". - That's the one that got me! - With someone sitting ~~on~~ your feet - you lay out on the floor - and assume a sitting position - with your hands locked behind your head. - You keep right on doing this - just as quickly as possible - each time touching your knees with your elbows - (hands still behind head). - until your muscles refuse to work any more. - The number of times you do this is calibrated for scoring - and each type of workout is added up! - I was in a sad shape after doing that, believe me - and then to have a cold settle in the sore muscles! - Try sitting up about 40 or so times - I dare ya!

I've gotta stop now - my arm is tired - and if I just lay it (the letter) down - I might not get back to it. - Best that I put it in an envelope! - Oh, yes - Fridays are my days off, now!

6! Everybody be good - and I'll probably call you up
tonight anyway - being as how it's Daddy's birthday -
Many happy returns of the day - Pop! -

Bye for now - and remember -

Love,
Frank